



The Hour

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BROOKLYN PRIESTS VISIT JUDGES ON BEHALF OF FRONTISTS

"The Boys Are Innocent and Must be Acquitted," They Tell the Bench

The Hour is reliably informed that certain members of the Catholic clergy in Brooklyn, New York, have been lately visiting local judges with pleas to acquit the seventeen Christian Frontists, now awaiting trial on charges of plotting an armed revolt against the United States Government, should the case happen to come up before these judges. "The boys are innocent and must be acquitted," the priests say to the judges. These visits seem to be bearing out the claim advanced late in January by Albert Gunnison, a leading Frontist, who in the course of a speech at a meeting of the Christian Front at Prospect Hall in Brooklyn said that the Brooklyn diocese of the Catholic Church was behind John F. Cassidy and the sixteen others and "would support them to the end" (see The Hour for January 27, 1940, page 1).

Three Priests Address Front's Latest Rally

On March 1 three priests addressed a rally held at Brooklyn's Prospect Hall for the purpose of aiding the defense of the seventeen Frontists. They were: the Rev. Edward Lodge Curran, president of the International Catholic Truth Society, who is often mentioned and praised in Father Coughlin's Social Justice; the Rev. Joseph Curran of St. Thomas Aquinas Church; and the Rev. Edward F. Brophy of Precious Blood Church in Queens. The leading speech was delivered by the Rev. Edward L. Curran, who termed the charges against the seventeen Frontists as "fantastic."

Ten of the seventeen, out on bail, were present at the rally and received a wild ovation from some 7,000 Christian Frontists and sympathizers filling the hall. The meeting was arranged by the Parents' Defense Fund Committee and chairmanned by Bernard D'Arcy, ardent follower of Father Coughlin who officially designates D'Arcy as "chief of the Social Justice forces in the New York area." Former Judge Leo Healy, now lawyer for the seventeen Frontists, was also present at the rally and delivered a speech, which was cheered. Among those filling

the hall and cheering the speakers, delegations from Newark, N. J., and Philadelphia occupied places of honor. The ovation, greeting the ten Frontists as they marched through the central aisle to their seats on the stage, lasted five minutes.

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COUGHLIN'S PAPER APOLOGIZES TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

In its leading editorial on page 6, Coughlin's Social Justice for March 4 is forced to apologize to the Catholic Church. Although Father Coughlin himself is really responsible for everything that appears in his weekly, the apology is signed not by him but by "Louis B. Ward, Editorial Director." The editorial reveals that there has been severe criticism of Coughlin's magazine for February 5, "first, on account of the caption on the front cover (Who Are the Enemies of Christianity in U. S. secondly, with respect to the language used in an article, 'On the Smear Front' on pages 10, 11 and 13." The criticism, according to the editorial was to the effect that the article in question was grossly offensive and defamatory to priests and bishops of the Catholic Church. Then comes the apology of Coughlin's Man Friday: "My humble, sincere and abject apologies for any language that has been used which in any way reflects on the honor of the Church, the good name of her bishops and priests, or for any language which may to the slightest degree tend to destroy the loyalty of the people."

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BEHIND MUSSOLINI'S RENEWED ANTI-SEMITISM

Letters received by a friend of The Hour from Italy indicate that during the last fall there was a general expectation that Mussolini would not put into effect the long-threatened measures against the Jews comparable to Hitler's Nuremberg laws. Many Jews who already held visas for other countries were unofficially assured by the Fascist officials and in consequence decided to stay. Some cancelled their steamship passage, and moved from their temporary shelter in hotels back to apartments.

Mussolini's latest decision to introduce the anti-Semitic measures after all, making them effective on March 1, came as a complete contradiction to the earlier unofficial assurances. The explanation is that Mussolini wished to flirt with the Allies, yet feared a break with Hitler. Putting into effect the long-contemplated anti-Jewish measures is thus a sop to Hitler, at what Il Duce holds to be a cheap price to Italy's interests.

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CONGRESSMAN THORKELSON ADDRESSES MOBILIZERS AND NAZIS IN NEW YORK

Audience Displeased by Dullness of Speech -- McWilliams Supplies Missing Belligerency

On Monday evening, March 4, some five hundred people filled the hall of Ebling's Casino in the Bronx, New York, to hear a promised anti-Semitic and anti-democratic speech by Jacob Thorkelson, 63-year old U. S. Congressman from Montana. The meeting was arranged by Joseph E. McWilliams, head of the Christian Mobilizers, a local organization which has a close working agreement with New York's Nazi Bund. A number of Nazi Germans were in the audience. Copies of Deutscher Weckruf und Beobachter, the Bund's official organ, were sold to the audience, as were issues of Father Coughlin's Social Justice, Pelley's Liberation, and Scanlon's Tablet. Anti-Semitic pamphlets by Thorkelson, published by Pelley, were peddled alongside of sheets purporting to prove "Roosevelt's Jewish ancestry." Handbills attacking the Jews and urging to "Buy Christian" were distributed free of charge.

Thorkelson's Attack On "Alien Minorities"

The audience was in a belligerent mood. During and after Thorkelson's speech, remarks were made clearly showing the listeners' disappointment with what they considered to be the speaker's timidity and dullness. The anti-Semitic Congressmen chose this evening not to make any open slurs upon the Jews, but to confine himself to attacking "alien minorities" and "alien agitators" and making other similar sallies which served as cues to anti-Semitic cries from the audience. The audience was restive because, as individual shouts showed, it wanted the speaker to go beyond these cues and hints. It wanted belligerency from the platform.

McWilliams also spoke. He supplied the missing belligerency by not only providing the audience with questions to which they replied with anti-Semitic slogans, but also by proclaiming his belief in American imperialism, by demanding immediate seizure of Canada and Bermuda, and by declaring that this country should be run by a "national-minded government." That McWilliams would like to proclaim himself as a possible candidate to head such a "national-minded government" was evident from his speech as well as from the fact that his henchmen were busy all evening hawking Joe's handsome portrait to the crowd, à la Hitler style.

Thorkelson's Ambitions

Curiously enough, similar ambitions seem to be entertained by Thorkelson himself. In this, the Congressman from Montana has had the support of William Dudley Pelley, head of the Silver Shirt Legion, now under indictment in North Carolina: on May 21, 1939, Liberation carried as its main editorial an article entitled "Perhaps Captain of the Republic!" wherein the following observations were made:

Thank God, a new star of patriotic inspiration is arising over the horizon of Capitol Hill in Washington! It is the scintillation of a man! His name is Jacob Thorkelson, and

he is Representative in the Congress from the First District of Montana. ... As the publishers of Liberation have watched this man, read his speeches, and observed his integrity, it begins to be evident that a new statesman is rearing high above this miasma of skulduggery. Momentous future achievements would seem to be upon the cards for him, if he refuses to be deflected from the course he has taken. The 'anti-Liberals,' 'anti-Rooseveltians,' and 'anti-Judaists' of the nation are combing the whole national scene at present for an uncontaminated public figure whom they can unite behind for President. Will Thorkelson be the man? Consider his record --

Thorkelson's biography then followed in Pelley's glowing terms but in the course of it the revelation was made that Thorkelson was born in Norway and came to this country at the age of 15. After the magazine was printed, someone must have pointed out to Pelley that the United States Constitution stipulates that only native-born Americans may hold the post of President of this country. Whereupon, in a great hurry, Pelley caused the two words, "for President," to be blacked out in printer's ink. Nevertheless, with a little strain of the reader's eyes, the blacked-out words can still be read.

Pelley realized that the Republicans, Thorkelson's present party will not be able to nominate the Norway-born man for the Presidency. Yet, Pelley did not pull out the issue of Liberation; he merely blacked out the two words, and distributed the magazine just the same. As it now stands before all posterity, Pelley's magazine urges Thorkelson for the post of "Captain of the Republic" -- a new title perhaps for an American dictator whom the Pelleys of this country would like to see installed in Washington, the United States Constitution to the contrary.

Montana's Plans to Unseat Thorkelson

From Montana come the tidings of a concerted effort now under way on the part of the State's citizenry to defeat Thorkelson at the next Congressional elections when his term is up. Thorkelson knows of the movement, and is worried. His recent efforts to insert into the Congressional Record various anti-Semitic speeches and other dubious documents are part of his naive campaign to "impress Montana." His visit to New York early this week to address the Christian Mobilizers and the Nazis is another attempt in the same clumsy series to show the folks back home that he is indeed "a big shot," delivering speeches in the country's largest city. It does not occur to him that the nation-wide attention, which such insertions and addresses cause, produces in Montana an impression quite opposite to what he, Pelley and McWilliams fondly imagine it to be.

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Through the Hourglass

MICHAEL SAYERS

THE NEW IMPERIALISM OF NAZISM

Under-Secretary of State Sumner Welles has been understandably reticent as to what was said during his conference with Hitler last week. We are informed, however, that American interests in Europe were discussed, and that

Nazi "peace-terms" were outlined. Hitler's repeated public utterances have made abundantly clear just what sort of "peace-terms" Mr. Welles can have heard. "What does it matter," Hitler asked last month on the seventh anniversary of his accession to power, "whether thirty, fifty or even two hundred diminutive states protest or claim a right to existence? Who takes any notice of it? Yet, when eighty millions stand as one man, it is a very different matter." Is it not evident from such statements that, as a matter of plain fact, Hitler has and can have no "peace-terms"?

The aims and methods of Nazism are incompatible with "peace-terms." The most that Hitler can offer is a temporary truce, on his own terms, for the purpose of redirecting his war-machine towards a new or old enemy. Hitler has never hesitated to make temporary truces with his enemies. On the contrary, his ends necessitate such maneuvering. But the ultimate aim of Nazism is not consistent with European peace, nor with world peace. Nazism means the unprecedented concentration and monopolization of economic and political power for the sole purpose of predatory conquest and the maintenance of imperial power. The difference between Nazism and other imperialisms is that Nazism envisages the colonization of Europe itself. Not in remote "barbaric" lands, but in the very heart of civilization, the Nazis are establishing their Empire.

Mistaken commentators have frequently echoed Nazi demagogy to the effect that Germany is a "have-not" nation forced by pressure of economic want to resort to brutal and terroristic methods. An editorialist writing in the Herald Tribune last week, discussing "peace-terms," even went so far as to suggest that Nazism might be converted into "normal" imperialism if the independence of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria was granted and the Allies were to "offer up a colony or two." But this is not only politically naive, it is positively playing into the hands of the Nazis, who themselves regard colonies and small nations as mere counters in the game of world politics. Nazi imperialism cannot be appeased with "a colony or two." Hitler will not refuse "a colony or two," naturally, but that is not sufficient for him now. He now demands "living space" in Europe. "Living space" in Europe for Nazism means the recognition of a German Empire in Central Europe. It means, in the first place, Nazi hegemony in Austria, Bohemia-Moravia, Slovakia, Poland, and Hungary. It means a Nazi Empire of 130,000,000 population, drilled and welded into a monstrous imperial politico-economic unit by the Nazi elite. It means the surrender of British and French interests in Europe. It means the reduction of the population of the small nations of Europe to the semi-human status of the colonial coolies.

The Nazis pride themselves on their "world-historical" outlook. They are fond of explaining that the old-style Empires are cracking at their foundations. And there is some truth in this. The age-long sleep of Asia is ending. China fights; India is roused; the Arabian multitudes are stirring. It is true that today the old great sea-empires are no longer able to maintain their rule over the "barbaric" peoples who are everywhere awakening to nationhood. And at this extraordinary epoch, the Nazis come forward with their megalomaniac project for a Land Empire in Europe itself. Clearly, any mention of "peace-terms" from the Nazi ruling caste is so much eyewash. Nevertheless, the German people do not want war. The people of England and France also do not want war. European statesmanship undergoes an extraordinary test. One can say only that in the past the failures of statesmen have often been remedied by the actions of the peoples.

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